

**3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling  
Environmental Assessment  
Roseburg District Office  
EA # OR-100-00-06**

Date Prepared: May 9, 2000

**Decision Record**

**Decision:**

It is my decision to authorize the implementation of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling as a tool for timber cruising. The use of this cruising methodology may be applied on regeneration harvest, commercial thinning and density management actions located in Matrix, Riparian Reserve and Late-Successional Reserve land use allocations within the Roseburg District.

The use of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling will only constitute the use of gas-powered chainsaws and hand tools in the felling, bucking and measurement of selected sample trees. There is no road construction, use of ground-based equipment, or any other manner of timber yarding associated with the action. A decision to retain felled sample trees as large woody debris or remove them as a portion of timber sale volume or will be addressed in sale specific environmental analyses.

**Rationale for the Decision:**

This decision is based upon the following; Alternative 2, the proposed action, makes available to use of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale sampling to assist the District in meeting requirements for timber cruise accuracy within plus or minus 10 percent of net timber volume, as stated in BLM Manual Supplemental Handbook H-5310-1; the proposed action will allow for greater cruise accuracy in heterogenous old-growth stands characterized by high defect and high value timber and for a more accurate appraisal that is beneficial to both the government and prospective timber purchasers; the proposed action will allow for the development of local volume tables and verification of timber volume equations that more accurately predict growth and volume relationships for managed second-growth timber stands. Adoption of Alternative 1, the no action alternative, would not meet these objectives.

Project design features and Best Management Practices will be developed in association with site-specific project analyses and will comply with the standards and guidelines contained in the Roseburg District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (June 1995). Impacts will not exceed those discussed in the Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (October 1994).

The action is covered under the 1999-2000 Programmatic Biological Opinion, dated June 28, 1999, from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and will be consulted under subsequent consultations.

Comments on this analysis were received from one organization. No issues were identified which were not addressed in the environmental analysis. The following points of clarification are provided. The information for these points of clarification is contained in the environmental assessment or documents referenced in the environmental assessment.

1. 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling is one of many tools used in timber cruising, and does not represent the sole method of cruising. As noted in Chapter 2, II on page 2 of the environmental analysis, the number of trees to be felled would be dependent on site and stand conditions. Circumstances may exist where the felling of sample trees is determined to be unnecessary.
2. In Chapter 4, II. (B)(1), on page 13, in the discussion of consequences to Special Status Species/Wildlife it was noted that the proposed 3P Fall, Buck and Scale sampling is an activity associated with timber sales. It was further noted that the activity was addressed in the 1999-2000 programmatic District Biological Assessment and the associated Biological Opinion from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This action will be consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in subsequent Biological Assessments as a feature of ongoing programmatic activities. The use of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling will conform with all applicable Terms and Conditions included in subsequent Biological Opinions.
3. A misstatement exists in Chapter 4, II. (C)(1), on page 15, under the discussion of consequences to SEIS Special Attention Species/Wildlife. The opening sentence of the paragraph should read 'There would be no direct or indirect impacts to wildlife species listed as Protection Buffer or Survey and Manage as a consequence of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale sampling'. This inadvertent editorial error does not affect the outcome or conclusions of the analysis.
4. A question was raised regarding the potential number of additional acres of timber sale preparation that could be required annually, in order to meet allowable sale quantity objectives, if underestimation of timber volume occurs. Such an effect would only apply to scheduled timber harvest in Matrix lands. It is noted in Chapter 4, I.(B)(1) on page 10, of the analysis, that "The difference in rate of harvest compared to that anticipated in the PRMP/EIS would be directly proportional to the level of underestimation of timber volume". In Chapter 4, I. (A) on page 9, the tendency for under-cruising timber quantity and quality was identified. In the Final Report of the Bureau of Land Management Oregon/Washington timber Cruiser/Appraiser Program (USDI, BLM. 1996. page 37) it was noted that under-cruising on the Roseburg District from 1972-1976 averaged minus 13 percent. With training and application of cruising methodology that includes 3P sampling, this under-cruising was reduced to an average of minus 4 percent, or a difference of 9 percent. If this 9 percent underestimation scenario was carried through and applied to the figures contained in Table - 3 Projected Annual Acres of Timber Harvest on page 12 of the analysis, it

could necessitate the preparation of an additional 130 acres annually in order to meet the allowable sale quantity objectives.

**Compliance and Monitoring:**

Monitoring of 3P Fall, Buck and Scale Sampling will be done in conjunction with timber sales on which it is employed as a feature of the timber cruise. The sales will be monitored in accordance with the ROD/RMP, Appendix I (pp. 84, 190-191, & 195-198)

**Protest and Appeals Procedures:** As outlined in 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests may be filed with the authorized officer within 15 days of the publication date of the Decision Notice in the News Review.

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Cary Osterhaus, District Manager  
Roseburg District Office

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Date